

Coeur d'Alene District Resource Advisory Council

Minutes of December 2 and 3, 2004

Location: Coffeerville, 1710 N. 4th Street, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Attendance:

BLM: Lew Brown (District Manager), Stephanie Snook (RAC Coordinator), Desiree Struble (recorder on 12/2/04))

RAC Members Present: Cora Patterson, Bruce Brewer, Sheila Barteaux, Jim Kingery, Sandy Emerson, Ronald Hood, Paula Laws, Jerry Shriner, John Barker, Cliff Osborne, Bob Barry, and Doug Boggan. **RAC Members Absent:** William Barteaux, Mark Taylor, Howard Van Tassel Jr.

Guests: Kurt Kotter (Associate State Director)

10:30 a.m. Welcome: Lew Brown (District Manager)-This is the first meeting with the new reorganization and many new RAC members.

Introductions: All

Agenda: Stephanie Snook (RAC Coordinator) reviewed the agenda and expectations for the two-day meeting.

BLM Overview: Kurt Kotter (Associate State Director)

- Thanked RAC Members for their participation
- Challenge: Accomplishments within budget constraints
- Explained Compass 2005 document–handout (Priority Goal Statements and Objectives)
- Current Issues
 - A. Public Access
 - B. Noxious Weeds (southern end)
 - C. Off-Highway-Vehicle Activities (what's appropriate)

Coeur d'Alene District: Lew Brown

- Overview of Coeur d'Alene District map, changes to the district
- Coeur d'Alene Office recognized as the leader in Forestry, Fuels and Recreation
- Coeur d'Alene Field Office - focus on boat launches/recreation sites
- Cottonwood Field Office - focus on river programs
- Briefing on Coeur d'Alene and Cottonwood offices/ number of staff and departments

Idaho BLM Reorganization: Kurt Kotter and Lew Brown

- A 4th District has been added in Twin Falls as of October 1, 2004. It includes the Burley, Shoshone, Jarbidge (south central) areas. Other districts are in Boise, Idaho Falls, and Coeur d'Alene.
- Coeur d'Alene District: A year in review
 - A. Working with other agencies on "First Responders"
 - B. Working with rural fire departments to bring them "up to speed"
 - C. Wildland Urban Interface
- BLM working on fire hazard areas:
 - A. Fuels reduction in the Silver Valley
 - B. Burning brushfields
 - C. Logging of dead and dying trees to reduce fuel load
 - D. Finding ways to use small diameter timber (e.g., Bonners Ferry)
 - E. Partnerships working well
- Cooperative Weed Management Areas (partnership with the Department of Agriculture)

RAC Roles & Responsibilities: Stephanie Snook

- Duties & Expectations of RAC Members: participate, ask for clarification, work together, try to reach consensus, keep an open mind, and follow Roberts Rules of Order
- Forming Subgroups
- How to prepare for a meeting (Agenda will be sent)
- Notice of RAC meetings must be published in the Federal Register
- Review RAC Notebook "State & Local" section gives information on RAC Members.
 - RAC Mission Statement, Charter, Duties, Ethics and Responsibilities
 - Decision Making
 - Rangeland Standards & Guidelines
- Websites: Meeting Minutes posted and information on members
- **Budget role of RAC Members:** Lew Brown and Stephanie Snook clarified that the RAC does not participate in budget decisions and will not be asked to do so. RAC recommendations can affect the budget, however.
- Meeting evaluations

Lunch (on-site)

1:00 p.m.

Review of Previous Minutes: Stephanie Snook (handout)

- Doug Boggan (previous RAC chair) reviewed minutes from the March 3 and 4, 2004 meeting; additional explanations were given to clarify items in the minutes for new members.
- Motion to Approve the Minutes made by Paula Laws; no further discussion. Motion seconded by Jerry Shriner and Motion Carried: approve the minutes as presented.

Review FY-2004 Accomplishments (hand-out of UCSC RAC Summary for FY 2004):

- Topics/highlights from last year's meetings
- Subgroups formed with Chairs: Fee Demo (Doug Boggan); Wild Horse & Burro (Jerry Shriner); OHV (Mark Taylor)
- Recommendations made by the RAC
- Actions taken by BLM
- How the recommendations were implemented
- Review and Discussion of Letter from RAC to State Director: OHV in 03/04 (handout-letter from Doug to Lew on OHV recommendations)

Wild Horse & Burro: The new Coeur d'Alene District has no wild horse & burro program (Challis area now managed from Idaho Falls District). Jerry Shriner asked about his role regarding this. The Coeur d'Alene District RAC would only get involved when there are state wide issues and local adoptions.

Report on Idaho RAC Chair Meeting: Boise-March 26, 2004

- Attendees: Doug Boggan, Stephanie Snook, Lew Brown
- 80 % of BLM managers in Idaho will be eligible to retire within the next 5 years
- Sage Grouse is a big concern in the southern part of Idaho
- 3 RAC Chairs met to put together their "annual work plan" for Idaho:
 - A. Sage Grouse
 - B. OHV use
 - C. Wild Horse and Burro program

Report on National RAC Chair Meeting: Phoenix-May 11-13, 2004

- Attendees: Doug Boggan, Stephanie Snook and Lew Brown
- Kathleen Clark-Bureau Director started the meeting off on a positive note
- Land Use Planning-2 RAC Chairs involved-(24 RACS Bureau-wide; some states have just one for each district, others have one or two for the entire state)
- Presentations on National Issues

Lew Brown stressed the importance of the RACs being involved and making recommendations on issues brought to the RACs. RAC recommendations are highly regarded by BLM managers.

OLD BUSINESS

- Handout: (Stephanie)-Memorandum of Understanding between State and Federal Agencies to form the Idaho OHV Coordinating Committee
- Idaho BLM OHV Strategy – This RAC formed a subgroup and was involved with developing input on this Strategy. The full RAC made recommendations on changes to the Idaho Strategy. (Handout- OHV PowerPoint Presentation)
- Enforcement of OHV use is an issue as there is only one Ranger for our entire district

- OHV and access issues will be covered in our upcoming Land Use Plans (currently underway)
- Sustainability Conference Update - Stephanie Snook & Mark Taylor have been involved with development of this. Information about the upcoming conference information was emailed to RAC members. Stay tuned for more information and try to attend.

Review 2004 RAC Annual Work Plan (Stephanie)

- Went over RAC Annual Work Plan using information in Notebook
- Issues in Annual Work Plan were identified at RAC meeting in March
 - *National Issues:* Weeds, Sage-grouse, grazing regulations, Energy
 - *State-wide Issues:* Off-Highway Vehicle Strategy, Rangeland Standards & Guidelines, Wild Horses and Burros, Sage grouse
 - *District/Local Issues:* OHV Strategy, Forest Health, Land Use Planning, Fire Management Plans

Agenda for Tomorrow's RAC Meeting

- Election of Officers
- Think about Tasks and Issues for tomorrow (preparation)

Doug Boggan asked if all business for the day had concluded. Jerry Shriner made a motion to adjourn for the day; Ronald Hood seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m. Minutes recorded by Desiree Struble, BLM.

New RAC Member Orientation Followed for: Sheila Barteaux, Ronald Hood, Jerry Shriner, Cliff Osborne, Jim Kingery, and Bruce Brewer.

December 3, 2004

Meeting started at 8:05 a.m.

Public Comment Period: No members of the public were in attendance.

Introductions:

Eric Thomson, Coeur d'Alene Field Manager
 Greg Yuncevich, Cottonwood Field Manager
 Carrie Christman, Assistant Cottonwood Field Manager
 Scott Pavey, RMP Team Lead for Coeur d'Alene Field Office
 RAC Members

Election of Officers:

Nominations were opened for position of RAC Chair. Cliff Osborne nominated Jerry Shriner, Bruce Brewer nominated Paula Laws. Jim Kingery made a motion to close the nominations; seconded by Sandy Emerson.

Jerry and Paula expressed their views and expectations if elected as Chair. RAC members voted Jerry Shriner as the RAC Chair. Congratulations Jerry!

Nominations were opened for Vice-Chair: Jim Kingery nominated Paula Laws. No other nominations were presented; Jim Kingery made a motion to close the nominations; seconded by Cliff Osborne. RAC members voted Paula Laws as their RAC Vice-Chair. Congratulations Paula!

There was a brief discussion on the position of Secretary for the RAC. BLM normally takes notes during the meeting; Stephanie provides other administrative support. All RAC members agreed there was no apparent need for a Secretary position.

The RAC members and BLM personnel thanked Doug Boggan for providing leadership as the RAC Chair last year.

NEW BUSINESS

Overview of the Coeur d'Alene Field Office – see attached notes

Overview of the Cottonwood Field Office – see attached notes

Resource Management Plans for the Coeur d'Alene and Cottonwood Field Offices: Carrie Christman, Assistant Cottonwood Field Manager and Scott Pavey, CdA Field Office Planning & Environ. Coordinator

Carrie and Scott made a presentation to the RAC; Carrie introduced the topic and described what an RMP is (notes attached). Scott followed with a presentation on the steps in the planning process (slides used are attached).

At the end of the presentation, Stephanie described how other RACs had been involved in the RMP process. She used the Dillon and Snake River/Birds of Prey RMPs as examples for potential involvement.

Later in the afternoon, the RAC discussed their annual work plan, which included involvement in the RMPs.

Motion: John Barker made a motion to form two subgroups, one for each RMP;

Motion seconded by Paula.

Motion Carried.

RAC Decision on RMP Subgroups: The RAC decided to form two subgroups, one for each plan. The **Cottonwood FO Subgroup** will be composed of:

- John Barker (lead)
- Bob Barry
- Doug Boggan
- Jim Kingery
- Cora Patterson
- JR Van Tassel
- Bill Barteaux

The **Coeur d'Alene FO Subgroup** will be composed of:

- Paula Laws (lead)
- Jerry Shriner
- Ron Hood
- Sandy Emerson
- Bruce Brewer
- Mark Taylor

The Leads for the Subgroups will be responsible for disseminating information to other members, logistics of meetings (coordinate with Stephanie) and subgroup membership.

Scott proposed that the RAC focus on becoming involved in the next major step in the process – alternative formulation and analysis. The RAC agreed.

Scott provided more detailed descriptions of how the FO staffs will likely proceed with the Alternatives: Continue Current Management, Commodity Emphasis and Conservation Emphasis. The staff would then analyze the effects of these alternatives and select or develop a fourth alternative as the Preferred Alternative. Scott suggested that the subgroups review the first three preliminary alternatives and analysis, and then provided feedback to the BLM staffs to incorporate comments into development of the Preferred Alternative. The RAC could also be given the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Preliminary Preferred Alternatives and effects analysis.

Scott presented the tentative schedule for the tasks. The first three preliminary alternatives should be completed by mid-March with analysis of these alternatives completed by late April. The Preferred Alternative would be developed in May. The RAC agreed to this proposal for involvement in both RMPs. Carrie and Scott will contact the subgroup leads in February to provide more details on the schedule.

The RAC also asked to be given the opportunity to review the preliminary scoping reports. Scott agreed to make these available to the subgroups, as well as other reports (AMS Summary, mineral reports, and Wild and Scenic Rivers reports) when they are completed.

Fee Demo Discussion: The Salmon-Challis National Forest (S-CNF)
1:00 Conference Call with Ken Stauffer, Project Manager

Legislation to extend the fee demo program is on the President's Desk and is expected to be signed within a week or two. Forest Service Policy team will guide implementation of the new fees. The S-CNF saw this as a window of opportunity to meet with the RAC and ask that you consider forming a subgroup to work with an adhoc group put together by the S-CNF either late winter or early-spring 2005.

Questions or Concerns raised by RAC members and response from Ken Stauffer:

What is the function of adhoc group? (Jerry S.)

Individuals with knowledge of Main and Middle Fork Salmon River are needed to review the previous accomplishments and to make recommendations on how to allocate the user fees by developing a list of proposed or future projects (about 30-50 projects). \$500,000 collected each year.

Concern about private non-commercial representation (Doug B.)

Ken will contact the two previously contacted groups as well as Idaho Rivers United, Idaho Whitewater Assn. and ask them to consider attending. There will be news articles published in Salmon, Boise, and Riggins asking people to participate.

What is the impact of the RAC recommendations? (Sandy E.)

Used extensively; implemented 90% of past recommendations. Likely to be 1 or two things the FS considers to be important that the subgroup may not think is important. Sideboards previously set by the subgroup have been almost completely honored; the Line Officer still has the final say.

There was an issue about reducing the fees last year. The RAC did not support it and we felt like it was almost a done deal before it came to the RAC. (Doug B.)

Will this still be a "fee demo" area if the appropriations bill passes? (Stephanie)

The recreation fee authority will cover multiple agencies and the appropriations bill may change the terminology from "fee demo".

What are the benefits if the RAC continues to work with the S-CNF? (Sandy E.)

Yours is a diverse group representing the public and will be exposed to interesting, fun and important work for the FS. If a subgroup is formed, they would form the adhoc committee; determine who should attend, where and when the meeting will be held, the topics as well as the project and work to be funded. The only other option for the FS is to hold full, open public meetings. The structure of the RAC, because it is FACA chartered, allows the FS the opportunity to use the RAC instead of the full, open meetings.

RAC Decision on Fee Demo Subgroup: Doug Boggan stated that he would be willing to serve on the subgroup and work with Ken and other RAC members to form a committee, have a meeting, and bring the recommendations to the full RAC for consideration.

Motion: Paula Laws made a Motion to form a subgroup to work with the S-CNF on the fee demo project recommendations.

Motion Seconded: Jim Kingery seconded the motion.

Discussion: need to prioritize workload – do we have time to work on this as well as other items the BLM is asking us to do? Legislation may allow the FS to have their own RAC. Ken guaranteed them that this would involve a minimal amount of time. Lew stated that we would put a time limit on this topic for the next meeting and expressed concerns about funding travel for the subgroup members. The S-CNF will reimburse RAC members for their travel expenses.

Motion Carried.

Fee Demo Subgroup: Doug Boggan (lead), Bob Barry, Jim Kingery, and Sandy Emerson.

RAC Annual Work Plan – Lew, Eric and Greg provided some information about topics/issues that the BLM wants the RAC to provide recommendations on. These and other topics from the RAC members were prioritized into two categories:

1. RMPs, Lower Salmon Mineral Withdrawal, and Cottonwood Travel Mgmt. Plan
2. Off-Highway-Vehicles; Weeds; Mining; Healthy Forests; Land Exchanges – Boise Foothills; Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive Species; and Fee Demo

RMPs - See discussion and subgroup info for Resource Management Plans under New Business above.

Lower Salmon River Mineral Withdrawal – proposed extension or continuation of the existing mineral withdrawal to protect recreation and scenic values. A presentation will be made at the next RAC meeting. BLM would like the RAC to make a recommendation on this topic.

Cottonwood Travel Management Plan – A draft plan has been completed and will be finalized soon.

Next Meeting

Agenda Topics: Items listed in the Annual Work Plan will be discussed further.

Location: Cottonwood area

Date: late April or mid-May, depending on timing of the RMP Alternatives

Meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m. Minutes recorded by Stephanie Snook, BLM.

Note to Readers: A copy of each attachment listed in the text of, or at the end of these minutes is on file with the official copy of the minutes in the Coeur d'Alene District Office of the BLM. Persons desiring to view attachments should contact Stephanie Snook, RAC Coordinator at 208-769-5004

Attachments:

*2005 Idaho BLM Compass Document

*OHV PowerPoint Presentation

*Sustainability Conference

*Pavey's RMP handouts

Field Office Briefings (Slide Presentation and notes)

* handed out at meeting